19

THE HUMBLE

PETITION

Of the

LORD MAYOR,

Aldermen, and Commons of the City of *London* in Common Council Assembled, as it was Presented to

His Majesty

In Council at *Windsor*, upon *Monday* the 18th of *June* 1683.

Together with the

Lord Keepers Speech.

Published by His Majesties Special Command.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

SHEWETH,

That Your Petitioners are most heartily and unfeignedly sorry for the Mis-Government of this Your City of late Years, whereby the Citizens have fallen under Your Majesties Displeasure: Which occasioned a Quo Warranto *to be brought against them; Upon which Judgement hath been Pronounced for Seizure of their Liberties and Franchises into Your Majesties Hands.*

That Your Petitioners are deeply sensible of, and thankfully acknowledge the great Favour of this Opportunity of Application to Your Royal Grace, vouchsafed them by means of Your Majesties not Requiring Judgement to be immediately Entred thereupon.

And now considering this our distressed condition, we humbly cast our selves at Your Royal Feet, Imploring Your Princely Compassion and Grace to be extended to this Your Ancient City, most humbly begging Your Majesties Pardon for all our Offences.

And we do in the Name of our selves, and all the Citizens, humbly tender, and Pray Your Majesty to accept the most Solemn Promises and Assurances of Constant Loyalty and Obedience to Your Majesty, Your Heirs and Successors, and of our Regular and Dutiful Administration of Your Government of this City for the future: Wherein we submit our selves to Your Majesties good Pleasure, and humbly beg Your Majesties Commands and Directions: Which we will with all Humility and Thankfulness Obey.

And Your Petitioners shall ever Pray, &c.

After the Reading of which Petition, The Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens were Commanded to withdraw; and being again called in, the Lord Keeper Spake to them as followeth.

My Lord Mayor,

I Am by the Kings Command to tell you, That He hath conſidered the humble Petition of the City of *London*, where ſo many of the preſent Magiſtrates, and other Eminent Citizens are of undoubted Loyalty, and Affection to His Service, That for their ſakes His Majeſty will ſhew the City all the Favour they can reaſonably deſire.

It was very long before His Majeſty took Reſolutions to queſtion their Charter: It was not the Seditious Diſcourſes of the Coffee-Houſes, the Treaſonable Pamphlets, and Libels dayly Publiſhed and Diſperſed thence into all Parts of the Kingdom, the Outragious Tumults in the Streets, nor the Affronts to His Courts of Juſtice could provoke Him to it.

His Majeſty had Patience until Diſorders were grown to that height, That nothing leſs ſeemed to be Deſigned than a Ruine to the Government both of Church and State; For the Factious Party were not content with the Practice of theſe Inſolencies, but endeavoured to have them publickly countenanced by the Magiſtrates, and for that end in all Elections they ſtickled to Chuſe the moſt diſaffected into Offices of the greateſt Truſt in the Government, and carried themſelves with that Heat and Violence, that it was a Terror to all ſober and diſcreet Citizens; and the City was ſo unhappily divided into Parties, That there was no likelihood it could return to good Order, ſo long as the Factious retained any hopes of procuring the Election of Magiſtrates of their own Party, for their Impunity.

It was high time to put a ſtop to this growing Evil. This made it Neceſſary for His Majeſty to enquire into their Abuſe of Franchiſes, that it might be in His Power to make a Regulation ſufficient to Reſtore the City to its former good Government.

It was not for Puniſhment, but meerly for the Good of the City that He took this Courſe.

And now the King hath obtained Judgement in a *Quo Warranto*, it is not His Intention to Prejudice them, either in their Properties or Cuſtomes. Nay, leſt the Entring a Judgment upon Record might have Conſequences Fatal to them, His Majeſty was ſo tender of them, That He cauſed Mr. Attorney to forbear the ſame at preſent, that the City might have ſome time to conſider their own Condition.

My Lord,

I muſt needs ſay, The City hath not been well adviſed to defer their Application to His Majeſty thus long, even till the Court hath Pronounced Judgement; It had been done with a much better grace, if it had been more early.

His Majeſties Affection to the City is too great to reject their Suit for that Cauſe.

But for that Reaſon you will have the leſs time to Deliberat upon the Particulars the King doth require of you.

And indeed, There will be little need of Deliberation; For His Majeſty hath reſolved to make the Alterations as few and as eaſie, as may be conſiſtent with the good Government of the City, and Peace of the Kingdom. They are Theſe;

His

His Majeſty Requires your ſubmiſſion to theſe Regulations;

THat no Lord Mayor, Sheriff, Recarder, Common Serjeant, Town Clerk, or Coroner of the City of *London*, or Steward of the Burrough of *Southwark*, ſhall be capable of, or admitted to the Exerciſe of their reſpective Offices, before His Majeſty ſhall have Approved them under His Sign Manual:

That if His Majeſty ſhall Diſapprove the Choice of any Perſon to be Lord Mayor, and ſignifie the ſame under His Sign Manual to the Lord Mayor, or in default of a Lord Mayor, to the Recorder or Senior Alderman; The Citizens ſhall within one Week proceed to a new Choice: and if His Majeſty ſhall in like manner Diſapprove the ſecond Choice, His Majeſty may, if He ſo pleaſe, Nominate a Perſon to be Lord Mayor for the enſuing Year.

If His Majeſtie ſhall in like manner Diſapprove the Perſons choſen to be Sheriffs, or either of them, His Majeſtie may appoint Perſons to be Sheriffs for the enſuing Year, by His Commiſſion, if He ſo Pleaſe.

Nevertheleſs, the Elections of theſe Officers may be according to the ancient Uſage of the City, with theſe Reſtrictions.

The Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen may with leave of His Majeſtie, diſplace any Alderman, Recorder, Common Serjeant, Town Clerk, Coroner of the ſaid City, and Stewart of the ſaid Burrough.

Upon Election of any Alderman, if any of the Perſons that ſhall be preſented to the Court of Aldermen by the Ward ſhall be adjudged unfit, upon ſuch Declaration by the ſaid Court, the Ward ſhall proceed to the Choice of other Perſons in the room of ſuch as ſhall be diſapproved: and if the ſaid Court ſhall diſapprove ſuch Second Choice, then they may appoint any others in their room.

The Juſtices of the Peace to be by the Kings Commiſſion, which His Majeſty will grant according to the uſual method, unleſs upon Extraordinary Occaſions, when His Majeſtie ſhall think it neceſſary for His Service.

Theſe Matters are to be Settled in ſuch manner as ſhall be Approved by His Majeſties Attorney and Solicitor General, and Councel Learned in the Law.

My Lord Mayor,

Theſe Regulations being made, His Majeſtie will not only Pardon this Proſecution, but Confirm your Charter in ſuch manner as may be Conſiſtent with them.

The City ſhould Look upon this as a great Condeſcention on His Majeſties part; it being but in the Nature of a Reſervation of a ſmall part of what is already in His Power by the Judgment: and of thoſe things which will Conduce as much to their own Good and Quiet as to His Service.

If the City ſhould Look upon it with another Eye, and neglect a ſpeedy Complyance, yet His Majeſtie hath done His part, and Demonſtrated His Affection to the City, by giving them this Opportunity.

And if there ſhall be any heavy Conſequence of this Judgment, which it will behove you well to Conſider, The fault will lie at their Doors, in whoſe power it now is, to bring this Affair to a happie Concluſion.

My Lord Mayor;

The Term draws toward an end, and *Midsomer-day* is at hand, when some of the Officers use to be Chosen, whereof His Majestie will Reserve the Approbation; Therefore it is His Majesties Pleasure that you return to the City, and Consult the Common Council, that He may speedilie know your Resolutions hereupon, and accordingly give His Directions.

That you may see the King is in Earnest, and the Matter is not capable of Delay, I am Commanded to let you know, He hath given Order to His Attorney General to Enter Up Judgment on *Saturday* next, unless you prevent it by your Compliance in all these particulars.

FINIS.

Edinburgh, Re-printed by the Heirs of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to His most Sacred Majestie; *Anno DOM.* 1683.